

Mediocreman And Spiro-Hero

Arthur Hoppe

FASTER than a Senate confirmation! More powerful than Phases One through Four! Able to straddle tall issues in a single straddle! It's . . . MEDIOCREMAN!

As we join Mediocreman today, kids, he's in his stuffy Oval Office disguised as the mild-mannered President. His pretty secretary, Lotus Lane (who doesn't know his true identity), enters, looking worried.

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Lotus: Terrible news, sir. What with Watergate and inflation, your popularity's at an all-time low. There's even talk of impeachment. You simply must do something drastic.

Mediocreman: Well, Lotus, I could give another State of the Union address.

Lotus (angrily): Your 15th? Who listens? (stomping out) Oh, how I wish Mediocreman were here!

Mediocreman: Hmm. Lotus is right. This sounds like a job for . . . Mediocreman!

(He steps into a phone booth beside his desk and whips off his stuffy old blue suit to reveal underneath a stuffy old gray suit, the uniform of . . . Mediocreman! He presses a secret button and up through a trap door pops his loyal sidekick . . . Spiro-Hero!)

Spiro (saluting): I'm glad you called, Chief. I wanted to thank you for your support in my hour of trouble. I mean when your press secretary was asked if you still had confidence in me, he replied with two words, "No comment." I sure appreciated that second word.

Mediocreman: Don't mention it, Spiro. But I've got to get the public's mind off my troubles. What we need is a big splash in the press.

Spiro: I'm always glad to speak your mind in public, Chief. You want me to get in another fight with the press? It's a

pleasure to loyally take my lumps in your cause.

Mediocreman: The problem I'm thinking of, Spiro, is corruption.

Spiro: Oh, don't worry, Chief. I've loyally been telling everybody you didn't know a thing about Watergate.

Mediocreman: It's not Watergate . . .

Spiro: Then it's San Clemente. I've loyally been saying it shows how intelligent you are, snookering a smart man like Bob Ablanap on a deal like that.

Mediocreman: I'm referring to . . .

Spiro: Raising dairy prices in return for a campaign contribution? A few more pennies for milk is a small price to pay, I always say loyally, for having you in office. Or is it the ITT merger? The Vesco deal? The . . . Whose head do you want, Chief? I'll loyally serve it up on a platter.

Mediocreman: Frankly, Spiro, yours. I read where you accepted a basket of fruit from a Baltimore admirer. (sternly) If there's one thing I cannot tolerate around here, it's any hint of corruption.

Spiro: (bewildered): But I'm innocent, Chief.

Mediocreman (clapping him on the shoulder): I knew I could count on your undying loyalty, Spiro. And look on the bright side: the press won't have you to kick around any more.

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Lotus (entering later with a stack of newspapers): Great news, sir. The press is full of nothing now but talk of Spiro's resigning. I'll bet Mediocreman is behind this. He's saved your bacon again. Oh, why can't you be more like him?

Mediocreman (winking into the camera): As you go through life, kids, remember that submitting a resignation is better than being impeached. So always keep an eye peeled for somebody who'll submit one.